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Select	Set Searched for	In	Records
O	S1 PRODIGY AND INTERNET	All subject words	20415
O	S2 (PREFERENCE OR PREFERENCES OR SETTINGS OR SETUP) Combined with set 1	All subject words	1081
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• Business & Industry(TM) (File 9)	• Gale Group New Product Announcements/Plus® (File 621)
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Records for: @pd<19930101
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Output Format: Full Record Output as: Browser display / send
Modify refine search back to picklist
select all none
Records 2 of 5 In full Format

2. **3/9/2 (Item 2 from file: 15)**
00685945 93-35166

Electronic delivery and feedback systems come of age

Wiesendanger, Betsy
Public Relations Journal v49n1 pp: 10-14
Jan 1993
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Abstract:

Technological advances have forever changed the day-to-day business of public relations. Broadcast facsimile, online media lists, and interactive networks may be novelties now, but they will soon be staples in a practitioner's portfolio of communication conduits. Fax-on-demand services offer speed and convenience in sending the same message to many recipients. Localized press releases, in essence, convert a national product story into a local news item. Several software vendors offer products to help track and analyze clips once media lists are culled and press releases are sent. For example, SpinControl by SpinWARE Publishing Inc. provides a media directory, among other things. NewsTrack, by The Right Brain Inc., is another software aid. Electronic mail is also becoming a strategic tool.

Text:

It may not be the paperless office, but it comes mighty close. Jon Pierce, an account executive for Paul Werth Associates in Columbus, OH, recently hired a market research firm to conduct a 75-question poll of 500 people. When the polling was completed, the firm sent Pierce raw data via CompuServe's electronic mail system. Pierce downloaded the data into his statistical analysis program, with no re-keying necessary, and was able to generate a report on the results within hours.

To hear public relations practitioners tell it, that's the kind of nimble, instantaneous exchange of information that clients, the media and a firm's constituencies are demanding these days. You don't have to be a high-tech hacker to realize that technological advances have forever changed the day-to-day business of public relations. Broadcast facsimile, on-line media lists and interactive networks may be novelties now, but they'll soon be

staples in a practitioner's portfolio of communication conduits. Add to that a host of gee-whiz gadgetry coming down the pike--such as the Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN), which will enable the existing telephone network to transmit much more information over standard lines and the craft of public relations looks very different than it did 10 years ago.

"Changes inside public relations offices--corporate and counselor alike--will be every bit as great as those in the outside world," predicted E.W. Brody, Ed.D., APR, co-author of "New Technology and Public Relations: On to the Future," published in 1991. "Survival in many cases may depend on a practitioner's ability to apply the new and emerging technologies. Inability to quickly access a database and extract information needed by a client or employer will be a crippling handicap to the practitioners of the 21st century." And let's not forget, he added, that the next century is only seven years away.

Keeping pace with all these changes can seem daunting at first. Yet when you realize that they will ultimately offer new ways to use familiar office equipment--namely, the facsimile machine and the personal computer--new technology becomes simply a user-friendly way to do your job faster, better and more easily. Here's a look at some new developments.

WIDE FLED AND NARROW NICHES

The popularization of the fax machine in the late 1980s was a turning point for public relations. Not only did it curtail the arduous copying, collating and mailing of press releases, it enabled practitioners to fall in sync with the timetables of the broadcast media, for which the news day is measured in hours, not days. The subsequent advent of broadcast fax, which transmits a single document to hundreds of recipients simultaneously, made it even easier to disseminate timely news quickly and efficiently. (For a report on the use of broadcast fax in the recent presidential campaign, see PRJ, November 1992, page 8.)

Now, several vendors, including PR Newswire and Business Wire, both based in New York City, have added a twist to the one document/many recipients formula. Last June, PR Newswire inaugurated PRONTO On-Call, a service that allows callers to dial an 800 number, request information by touchtone phone, and receive a document within minutes on their fax machine. Designed to cut the time and cost of providing frequently requested information such as earnings reports, news releases, crisis communications documents and merger announcements, the service's big selling point is security. Companies offering the service give the 800 number only to people authorized to receive the information. In addition, different personal identification numbers (PINs) can be assigned to separate groups of callers. If, for example, a company is spinning off a new subsidiary, analysts, the press and employees can each be given different PIN numbers that will access different information.

Mark McCall, vice president of Nations Bank Corp. in Charlotte, NC, recently installed a fax-on-demand system to handle the deluge of requests for quarterly earnings statements. "We used to send 50 to 100 faxes in the two or three days after earnings statements came out," he said. "The new system is a lazy person's way to make sure everybody who requests information gets it. And, it doesn't tie up our fax machine." After a test ran, McCall installed a second line to handle requests for recent press releases.

Fax-on-demand services such as the one used by McCall offer speed and convenience in sending the same message to many recipients. Other technology, however, answers a different need: slicing audiences into smaller segments and customizing messages for each.

"It's one thing to put one release together and send it to 15,000 people.

It's quite another to send a release in many different forms, according to the audience," noted Ronald L. Solberg, APR, president, Easycom, Inc., Downers Grove, IL. "We've certainly had to know our audience in the past, but not to the degree that's required today."

Once again, technology can lend a hand. In conjunction with Norwalk, CT-based PR Data Systems, Inc., Solberg increased local publicity for his client, Ford Motor Co., by as much as 700%.

To trumpet the rollout of its new car models, Ford needed a low-cost way to garner publicity for more than 2,000 dealers located in primarily rural locations. The answer: "localized" press releases that, in essence, convert a national product story into a local news item.

PR Data created a computer file on each dealer that included name, address, phone number and the name of a local spokesperson. This file was then combined with standard release text to create 9,600 customised releases, which were sent to specially culled press lists within geographic boundaries. For example, the headline for one release was "1993 Mercury Villager Arrives at Arlington Dealership." Following an Arlington dateline, the first paragraph mentioned the name of the dealership. The release went on to quote the dealership's president.

"For this kind of release, we normally expect 5% usage," reported L.A. Weis, public affairs manager for the Ford Division of Ford Motor Co. But in a mail survey of 300 dealers following a release on the Ford Explorer, 35.6% reported usage of the story in their local media.

For this kind of "micro-messaging," tighter and more targeted media lists are a must. Business Wire, for instance, recently added special African-American, Asian and Hispanic media services in response to customer demand.

Format, too, is becoming more important. Not only are practitioners requiring more specificity in media lists, they are looking for ways to make these lists more versatile. Computerized formats--whether they be on-line, on disk, or on CD-ROM--fit the bill.

One recent entrant in this arena is "PRpower," database software containing the names of more than 2,000 editors, reporters and correspondents covering the high-tech industry. As with any database program of this ilk, much of the data is already available in printed directories. However, the program offers the added benefit of being able to sort, search and manipulate entries. For example, it can produce a list, chronologically arranged by issue closing date, of publications planning special issues on a particular topic. Or, for a press conference, it can produce personalized letters of invitation to editors in a local area.

Many established vendors of media directories are now offering lists on disk. Larriston News Media Directories are published in both disk and book form, but about on-quarter of its customers buy both. "The reality is that you use computer-based data and books differently," said Sheila Gordon, managing partner of Larriston Communications in New York City. "Books give you an overview. Then, to key in on certain markets and manipulate data, you turn to the disk format."

BPI Media Services in New York City creates custom media lists and offers them in hard copy, mailing label, or diskette form. Search parameters include type of media, staff title, editorial subjects, program categories (such as hard news or public affairs), how information should be packaged (release, tape, photo), and, for broadcast media, preferred guests (authors, politicians, etc.) BPI is looking into making lists available on-line and on CD-ROM, reports BPI representative Pam Simmons.

On-line media lists are another up and-coming format. Both Bacon's

Information Inc. and Burrelle's offer on-line information retrieval. In addition, Media Distribution Services in New York City has just introduced its "Targeter" system, which allows users to do their own on-line screen searches of MDS' media lists. Users can access Targeter" through either their own PCs or MDS provided equipment, and are not charged for on-line time.

Still, for all the innovations in list content and format, many practitioners say they will continue to compile their own lists from multiple sources. "None of the available systems seems to perfectly answer our dreams," said Barbara Coons, director of research services for Hill and Knowlton's Washington, DC, office. Coons supplements MDS' "Targeter" system with her own in-house lists.

"Although you can pull a lot of stuff from these lists, you need to have some one who is knowledgeable about reporters--their beats, their personal **preferences** and their quirks," Coons pointed out. "For lists we use over and over, we have found it's less expensive to develop them ourselves."

BEYOND SCISSORS AND CALCULATORS

Once media lists are culled and press releases sent, technology again steps m to aid practitioners in the final leg of the publicity cycle: tracking and analyzing clips.

Several software vendors have leaped into this niche. SpinControl(TM), offered by SpinWARE Publishing, Inc. in College Park, MD, provides a media directory and allows users to print media contact reports, calculate ad value equivalency, and assign ratings within various user-defined parameters such as number of product mentions or whether the article was positive or negative in tone. Also offered with the package is SpinFAX, which creates personalized form letters and press releases, then automatically faxes them to reporters in SpinControl's media files.

NewsTrack, put out by The Right Brain, Inc. in Shoreview, MN, enables users to calculate cost per impression for news clips or broadcast exposure. Users enter data on each clip, such as size of audience and inches of copy or broadcast time, as well as billing or project cost information. The program will then generate a "Performance Summary" report that lists total exposures, total overall impressions, effective cost per impression and more.

One of the most intriguing uses of technology for clip analysis was a project undertaken late last year by PR Data Systems, Inc. and Dayton, OH-based Mead Data Central. To determine whether a liberal bias tainted press coverage of the presidential campaign (as was alleged by GOP officials), Mead searched its on-line database, NEXIS(R), for news stories on the presidential debates. The stories were then analyzed by a team of five PR Data researchers, who ranked headlines, lead paragraphs and story text "all favorable," "mostly favorable, "mostly negative," or "all negative" for each candidate.
The verdict: researchers say they found clear evidence of bias. Examples of bias were found in such phrases as "Presidential Candidate Ross Perot: Credibility Shredded" and "GOP playing games to keep their grip on the White House, in which reporters appeared to be editorializing rather than citing third-party sources.

Overall, practitioners give clip analysis programs mixed reviews. "I've looked into the available software, but I don't see where it's providing any unique benefits at the moment," stated Werth's Pierce. "Unless it provides us with some sort of time or cost advantage, or enables us to provide better service for our clients, it's not worth it."

Others in the public relations industry aren't willing to dismiss these programs out of hand, however. "There are three areas of clip analysis in

which I think technology could be very helpful: speed, completeness and convenience," added Solberg of Easycom. He sees issues analysis, in which software can help analyze content of media coverage by flagging and rating particular words used, as an area ripe for future development.

"E" IS FOR "EASIER"

Electronic mail, a staple in many internal computer networks, is now becoming a strategic tool. Not only is it giving some practitioners a leg up on the competition when it comes to media placements, it's also becoming a value added service for clients.

Pierce of Werth and Associates has found e-mail to be a boon in several instances. For one client, a manufacturer of computer power units, he writes, edits and lays out a newsletter, sending it over e-mail to the client for approval after each step of the process. He's now trying to work out a way to send the final layout to the printer via modem.

For another client, a coalition of farming and business organizations, he transmitted an op-ed piece to several newspapers via e-mail. The editorial, bylined by a toxicologist, dealt with a chemical labeling issue that was on the Ohio state ballot in November. He credits e-mail for its subsequent pick-up in several newspapers. "Because we were able to get to them so quickly, it made it easier for them to use it in their very next issue, when they happened to have a news hole to fill," Pierce said.

Of course, e-mail isn't necessarily a panacea. Although Tom Latimer, general manager of Hill and Knowlton's Atlanta, GA, office, is connected on-line to the internal e-mail system of one of his clients, a division of IBM, he's cautious about forging connections with other clients. "I'm not sure it would make sense for smaller clients because of the expense of the software and the confidentiality agreements that have to be hammered out," he admitted.
Another obstacle to wider e-mail use is the lack of standards from system to system. Although large commercial providers such as CompuServe Mail, AT&T Mail and **Internet** have made great strides in interconnectivity (CompuServe users can now send messages directly to mailboxes in other systems), hooking up with clients' internal systems can be more laborious. Usually, some sort of emulation software is required to make both parties' computer systems speak the same language. However, the increasing acceptance of X.400 protocol is making connectivity between dissimilar e-mail systems possible. Information system experts expect even more enhancements in e-mail's ease of use down the road.

THE ROAD NOT YET TAKEN

Nearly every day, newspapers herald the advent of some new technology that, in one way or another, is bound to seep into the public relations discipline. During one week this past November, for example, the **Prodigy** Services Co. announced a campaign on the environment to be waged over its interactive PC network, in which subscribers will be able to ask questions about any environmental issue and receive answers instantly. In addition, IBM and NBC announced plans to test a desktop news service that would provide news and information on demand, in text and video.

The challenge in the face of all these changes is assimilation. As one practitioner put it, "Telling me that I have access to any technology is akin to telling me I have access to the space shuttle. I'm glad I've got it, but I have no idea what to do with it."

What will you do with the new technological tools for message delivery? Certainly, knowing they exist is the first step. The hard part is folding them into the everyday practice of public relations in a way that makes sense. "There's a feeling that if I have a computer, I'm a desktop publisher. It just doesn't work that way," reflected Easycom's Solberg. "It

does mean that there is potential for all of us in the communications business to do more things better and faster. The other side of it, of course, is that we can also do more things worse.

"PR practitioners who are afraid of this technology or think they don't need it will be left behind," he added. "There's just no getting around it."

Betsy Wiesendanger is a freelance writer based in Peekskill, New York.

THIS IS THE FULL-TEXT.

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Company Names:
PR Newswire
PR Data Systems Inc
Ford Motor Co (Duns: 00-134-4746 Ticker: F)
BPI Media Services
Bacons Information Inc
Geographic Names: US

Descriptors: Press releases; High technology; Technological change; Software packages; Public relations; Manycompanies; Manyproducts
Classification Codes: 2400 (CN=Public relations); 9190 (CN=United States); 5240 (CN=Software & systems)

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Output Format: Full Record Output as: Browser display/send
Modify refine search back to picklist
select all | none?
Records 3 of 5 In full Format

3. **3/9/3 (Item 3 from file: 15)**
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Of Bytes and Rights

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Technology Review v95n8 pp: 22-29
Nov/Dec 1992
CODEN: TEREAU
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Abstract:

Computers and electronic communications, with their power to store and manipulate enormous quantities of information, are raising threats to privacy. As access increases, so does the potential for loss of privacy. Both governments and businesses have amassed enormous databases. Much of the information can be cross-referenced and aggregated using an individual's Social Security number, which has become a national identification number. Electronic communication is inherently more vulnerable to interception than conventional forms of communication. Every electronic mail message or bulletin board posting is stored on a central computer so that it can be forwarded to its recipient or broadcast to all network subscribers. Once stored, these messages can be searched for certain words, phrases, or names. One way to accelerate change would be to create a watchdog organization to identify actions by business and government that threaten privacy. Canada, the UK, Australia, and other nations have already created privacy protection organizations that have considerable power.

Text:

Inhabitants of our angst-ridden urban society often yearn for the close community of long-ago village live--where, to quote the popular TV theme song, "everybody knows your name." Technology is making this return possible, at least figuratively: the ability to commune with "neighbors" around the world through a computer keyboard and a telephone line has created something new--a small town, globally distributed. But there's a dark side to this folksy metaphor. Ask people who have lived in small towns and they'll tell you that what you that what you gain in friendliness you lose in privacy. Mabel the phone operator knows your business, and sees

nothing wrong with telling it to Floyd the barber and Andy the sheriff. There aren't many secrets in a village, and freedom of speech usually ranks second, after the imperative to avoid offending other community members.

Computers and electronic communications, with their seductive power to store and manipulate enormous quantities of information, are raising threats to privacy that go far beyond the benign meddling of small towns. Computers linked to telecommunications networks spread information--and misinformation--faster than it can be managed. As access increases, so does the potential for loss of privacy. While an outcast of a small town can always leave, few can escape the evermore-ubiquitous computer network.

The emerging network is also raising questions about freedom of expression. Who can be held responsible for statements posted on a computer bulletin board? What right do the government and private organizations have to censor "speech" disseminated over the network, and to prevent citizens from encoding their electronic communications?

These questions defy easy answers because computers differ fundamentally from any other communications medium. Telephones permit one-to-one contact. With broadcast media such as radio, television, and print publishing, information flows in one direction, from one source to many receivers. With computer networks, millions of individuals can communicate with one another more or less simultaneously. Everyone becomes, in effect, a potential publisher or television station. Nothing in the present legal or regulatory framework anticipates such a dispersion of information sources.

Today comparatively few people take advantage of the opportunity to tap into networks, but use is growing much faster than any consensus on rules for governing privacy and free expression. As of 1991, there were almost 60 million personal computers in the United States, and a PC could be found in 26 percent of households. Many of these computer users exchange ideas and trade software on local computer bulletin-boards, thousands of which are linked in a national system called FidoNet.

And somewhere between 5 and 10 million people now communicate on the **Internet** --a huge "mother network" that originally served government and academia. The number of computers connected to the **Internet** has been doubling every 8 to 15 months for the past three years, says Vint Cerf, vice-president of the Corporation for National Research Initiatives in Reston, Va., which writes standards for the network. These proliferating networks are transforming the personal computer into soapboxes on which millions can stand to blare their message to the world.

Moreover, the telephone system is shifting to all-digital transmission, which would make computer communications work more smoothly. And recent court rulings allow telephone companies to offer information services, which the terms of the Bell System divestiture had originally forbidden. The pieces are falling into place for a national public computer network.

While the network is taking shape, concerned groups and individuals are working to ensure that privacy and freedom of expression do not get short shrift. One of the most outspoken defenders of such rights is the Cambridge, Mass.-based Electronic Frontier Foundation. Headed by Lotus Development Corp. founder Mitchell Kapor, EFF aggressively supports rapid implementation of a national network available at low cost to everyone. Mindful of the inherent risks, Kapor speaks with passion and great technological authority about the need to preserve individual freedom in the new realm he has helped to create.

Other advocacy groups, such as Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility (CPSR) and the American Civil Liberties Union, also anticipate that the technology will bring much good. Nevertheless, they vigilantly attempt to head off governmental or business practices that might infringe privacy or curtail freedom of expression. The activities of

such organizations constitute a rare case of technologists paying heed to the potential dangers of their creations before it's too late.

These network aficionados are something like minesweepers, encountering a variety of legal, regulatory, and ethical traps as they explore the new terrain of "cyberspace." At present, they are fighting skirmishes on a number of loosely related issues that, taken individually, do not seem particularly menacing and that have barely appeared as blips on the radars of Congress and executive-branch policymakers. But the outcome of these fights could profoundly influence patterns of communication for a long time to come.

LOOKING FOR A MODEL

The novelty of the emerging universe of computer networks makes for confusing First Amendment status. Is a posting on an electronic bulletin board equivalent to making a speech in a town square, publishing a newspaper, or talking to someone on the telephone? In practice, the communities that have sprung up around electronic watering holes are making up the rules of conduct as they go along. In some cases this results in censorship. **Prodigy** Information Service, for example--a joint venture of Sears and IBM that aspires to be a kind of national electronic gathering place--has shifted policies several times regarding what kind of messages it will allow to be posted. Using software to scan each message, **Prodigy** looks for obscenities and other words that indicate possible offensive content. Any message that the program flags is routed to a **Prodigy** editor for inspection. Unsuitable postings are suppressed and the writer is sent a standard rejection note.

But must everything on-line meet such Disneyesque standards? "It would be horrible if you couldn't use this medium unless you don't offend anyone," says Alan Westin, professor of public law and government at Columbia University. Westin proposes labeling computer bulletin boards much as movies are rated. **Prodigy** could maintain its standards as a family medium and receive the equivalent of a G rating. Sexually oriented material--which exists in abundance on computer networks--could be X-rated and passwords to gain access issued only with proof of age. These systems would notify users when they sign on of the nature of the material they contain. "People ought to know what they are opening themselves up to" when they log on, says Westin.

However, a recent federal court ruling in New York suggests that this strategy may be counterproductive. CompuServe Information Service was sued for libel because of information disseminated in an on-line newsletter. The judge ruled that CompuServe could not be held responsible because it was not like a newspaper, resembling instead a bookstore or library. A newspaper publisher is responsible for libelous statements, but a bookstore owner is not, because it is unreasonable to expect the owner to review the contents of all books sold.

This decision means that operators of bulletin board systems ("sysops," as they're known) can shield themselves from liability by practicing laissez-faire--letting anything and everything go online. Any service that adopts a more restrictive approach by, say, prohibiting obscenity or racial insults, begins to resemble a newspaper and can thus be held legally accountable. **Prodigy** vice president and general counsel George Perry suggests that bulletin boards issue a disclaimer each time users log on-a statement saying, in effect, that they can read posted messages at their own risk.

A QUESTION OF EXPECTATIONS

Unlike First Amendment proponents, those battling to preserve privacy in the new world of widespread computer networks may be doomed to fail. Every

time you pay taxes, buy insurance, use a credit card, or apply for a loan, you surrender a bit of personal information. Every time you call an 800 phone number, the recipient gets a record of your phone number, which can be traced to your address using the "reverse phone directories" that some telephone companies market.

Both governments and businesses have amassed huge databases. Much of the information can be cross-referenced and aggregated using an individual's Social Security number, which has become (in direct opposition to the original intent) a national identification number. It's possible, knowing only a few pieces of information about individual people, to assemble dossiers on where they live, what they buy, and who they associate with. "Privacy is already shot to hell and there's not a chance to retrieve it," asserts Jim Warren, a computer industry conference organizer and author based in Woodside, Calif.

But Marc Rotenberg, director of Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility's Washington office, says networks should offer users the same degree of confidentiality they have come to expect from a visit to the town library. A library permits patrons to check out books free of charge with no questions asked. A person can browse through the stacks of a library without leaving any record; anyone could spend hours perusing material on virtually any subject and no one would be the wiser for it. The librarians won't tell.

In effect, this approach would treat the network as a common carrier, like the postal service and the phone company. A common carrier traditionally places no restrictions on the content of the traffic it carries, nor does it take any legal responsibility for it (you can't sue the phone company for slanderous phone calls that pass through its lines).

But Warren challenges the view that privacy should be paramount to other values: if we want large amounts of information easily accessible to large numbers of people, we have to recognize that it will be impossible to keep our lives secret. "You give up some privacy every time you join a community," he says.

Civil libertarians reject such fatalism not just on general principles but for a strategic reason: the Supreme Court has held that when there is a "reasonable expectation" of privacy, then privacy should be enforced. The court ruled that even the user of a public pay phone can reasonably expect protection from eavesdropping. But can society expect this protection to follow into the realm of computer networks?

Electronic communication is inherently more vulnerable to interception than conventional forms of communication. Phone calls can be tapped one at a time, but the tapper must listen to the whole conversation. Paper mail can be intercepted, but it is laborious to search large quantities. By contrast, every e-mail message or bulletin-board posting is stored on a central computer so that it can be forwarded to its recipient or broadcast to all network subscribers. Once stored, electronic messages can be searched for certain words, phrases, or names. Surveillance takes on an ominous new dimension.

Is it reasonable for a computer user to expect, much less demand, the same privacy protections afforded paper mail and telephone calls? Users hope the answer is yes. A kind of community consciousness-raising is now occurring through the silent cacophony of online discussions. If network users establish among themselves an expectation of privacy, they are laying the foundation for legal protection.

But this strategy might not work quite as planned, says Janlori Goldman, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's technology and privacy project. The courts have defined "expectation of privacy" to reflect not so much a collective mindset as a technological possibility, she maintains.

Thus as long as electronic communications are technically easy to snoop on and computer users know this, then the courts could rule that a reasonable person cannot expect absolute privacy.

A TAPPABLE NETWORK?

Ironically, digital technology offers, in principle, unprecedented privacy. It is possible to use a computer program to encode a message so that its meaning will be revealed only to someone possessing a digital key. Such "encryption" serves two principal purposes: it ensures that only the person for whom the message is intended will read it, and it guarantees that the person who appears to have sent a message is indeed the actual sender. Without encryption, someone skilled in software manipulation can with relative ease impersonate someone else over the network. (Although virtually all systems require users to enter a password, hackers can run programs that quickly try dozens of likely passwords.)

Right now, anyone in the United States can legally encrypt an electronic message. This is a relatively tolerant policy; France, by contrast, permits encryption only for government-related communication. Several U.S. software companies license the most advanced and commonly used encryption algorithm, patented by RSA Data Security of Redwood City, Calif.

Still, few commercial products have built-in encryption capability. The reason is that the United States forbids export of any product containing the RSA algorithm, and software companies are reluctant to develop programs they cannot sell abroad. (Ironically, the U.S. government does not restrict cryptography imports. Thus a U.S. company wishing to sell cryptography products in the United States would do best to move operations overseas.)

The result, say cryptography advocates, is that most electronic communications have all the privacy of a postcard. This may suffice for the casual exchanges that comprise much electronic-mail traffic. But unless users can be assured of higher security, computer networks will languish. Not many items of paper mail really require secrecy, yet few people would accept a system that in effect forced every letter to be sent in an unsealed envelope.

Meanwhile, the law-enforcement community, seeing computer networks as the latest venue for criminals to conspire, may soon attempt to restrict domestic encryption directly. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has proposed legislation that would require all the switching computers in both the public telecommunications network and private organizations to be "tappable." The bill, which the FBI hopes to put before Congress this fall, attaches a stiff penalty--$10,000 a day--for any company failing to comply. The bill does not specifically mention encryption, but if law-enforcement agencies consider wiretapping an entitlement, then banning technology that significantly raises the difficulty of conducting surveillance would seem to make sense, says CPSR's Rotenberg.

The proposal reflects the FBI's concern that the new digital network will stymie attempts to conduct court-sanctioned surveillance. Old-fashioned telephone lines can be tapped with relative ease, says James K. Kallstrom, the FBI's chief of investigative technology, since each voice conversation travels along its own wire loop. Digital technology, in contrast, interleaves hundreds or even thousands of conversations and data transmissions on each wire or optical fiber. Manufacturers of switching computers have not built into their products a way to extract the contents of a particular line, claims Kallstrom. The proposed bill would require that all phone equipment have such capacity.

Although Kallstrom says that members of the law enforcement community "only want to keep the same access we already have," the FBI's proposal has raised a fury among civil libertarians. "Wiretapping is a necessary evil, but to treat it as an entitlement would be a great mistake," says

Rotenberg. Columbia's Westin concurs: "It's like saying that no private home may have thick steel doors because some day the police might want to kick the door in as part of a lawful criminal investigation."

These opponents contend that the FBI is indeed seeking new authority. Rotenberg draws an analogy from outside of cyberspace: a hotel manager must open the door of a room for police only if they have a search warrant, and similar requirements currently exist for wiretapping. "What the FBI now wants," Rotenberg says, "is akin to requiring a hotel manager to leave a master key with the police so they will be able to search any room at any time." He points to the bill's stipulation that phone switching systems allow the FBI to record calls from a "remote facility"--that is, without having to go to the premises of the person whose line is being tapped or to a central switching office. This provision implies that FBI agents could sit at a terminal, punch in an authorization code, and tap any line they choose, Rotenberg maintains.

Nothing in the bill would change the legal status of wiretapping--police would still have to get a warrant if they wanted to use in court any evidence obtained from a tap. But that ignores the way police actually operate, says Kenneth Phillips, professor of telecommunications at New York University and chair of the Committee of Corporate Telecommunications Users, a nonprofit lobbying organization. Often police will tap a phone line simply to gather background information that can help persuade a judge to issue a warrant, he maintains.

Besides, critics note, the FBI ought to figure out its own ways of conducting wiretaps. "Historically," says EFF staff counsel Michael Godwin, "when advances in communications technology have raised problems for law enforcement, the government has coped by developing advances in its own investigative techniques. When telephone systems made it hard to monitor suspects' plans and activities, the government didn't outlaw telephones--it learned how to implement wiretaps. "

But the FBI objects to the notion that it should have to continually play catch-up to the criminal community. "That doesn't seem to me a very good use of resources," says Kallstrom. "Why should we spend millions of taxpayer dollars to develop systems to conduct legally authorized wiretaps? Wouldn't it be a lot more efficient to cooperate in the beginning?" He cites cellular telephones as an example of what can go wrong. The only way to tap a cellular call is to plug into one of about five ports in the cellular switch. In lower Manhattan, he says, there are typically "100 court-ordered wiretaps vying for these five ports. Criminals understand this and use cellular communications with impunity." Kallstrom insists that allowing the entire phone network to evolve into such a haven would be disastrous for law enforcement.

The FBI proposal marks an opening salvo in what could become a protracted battle between government agencies and civil-liberties advocates. But even those allied with the law-enforcement community admit that public demand will eventually bring encryption into widespread use, says Donn Parker of SRI International in Menlo Park, Calif. The question then becomes how to catch the bad guys without tapping their phone calls. Ironically, the answer may be to permit police greater physical access to suspects' houses and offices, where surveillance can be imposed before information is encrypted.

For instance, Parker proposes that cameras could be positioned to take video images of hands on a computer keyboard. Investigators could then play back the tape frame-by-frame if necessary to reconstruct what was entered into the computer. Conversations could be monitored by bouncing a laser beam off the window; voices cause the window to vibrate, and the vibration modulates the reflected beam. But such measures seem even more intrusive and Orwellian than old-fashioned wiretapping.

A DELICATE BALANCE
Overall, the flares of conflict beginning to dot the cyberscape are shedding more heat than light. The rhetoric of the EFF and CPSR exaggerates the desire of government and business to wantonly snoop on the computer-using citizenry and chill their right to speak freely. Likewise, the law-enforcement community's reply to bulletin board operators who object to raids on their systems--if you didn't do anything wrong, you don't have anything to worry about-is equally unconvincing.

But if civil libertarians overstate the immediate danger, they are accurately portraying the long-term threat Society needs to protect computer use, says EFF's Godwin, because history shows that whatever rights are not explicitly protected will probably be infringed. As evidence, he cites the government's raids on computer bulletin boards thought to be involved in illegal activity. Federal agents in these raids have not simply copied material from the disks but confiscated computers in what EFF claims is a violation of the Fourth Amendment prohibition against unreasonable search and seizure.

Partly in response to such fears, Harvard law scholar Laurence Tribe suggests that the Constitution itself be extended to explicitly cover cyberspace. He proposes a Twenty-Seventh Amendment to ensure that protections of free speech and against unreasonable searches apply regardless of the technological medium used to transmit, store, or alter information. (In 1967, the Supreme Court similarly extended Fourth Amendment protections to telephone conversations.) The proposal has yet to be introduced in Congress.

If amending the Constitution seems to be everybody's favorite blunt policy instrument, less grandiose proposals are more likely to move beyond the conceptual stage. NYU professor Phillips, for example, says that Congress should convene a commission of experts "to study these issues in depth." But no blue-ribbon report is likely to spur Congress to quick action. One reason is that it is unclear who in Congress "owns" the issue. In the Senate, for example, questions on how to establish a national information infrastructure are handled by the Science, Technology, and Space Subcommittee. Privacy issues, in contrast, are in the domain of the Judiciary Committee, which is not strong in technical expertise. Such balkanization slows progress.

One way to accelerate change, some believe, would be to create a watchdog organization--a "data protection board" with members appointed by the president subject to Congressional approval--to identify actions by business and government that threaten privacy. Such a board might, for example, have alerted the public to Lotus's plans to market a database containing the names, addresses, and buying **preferences** of millions of Americans. A few activists, working in the populist medium of computer networks, raised such a furor that Lotus abandoned the product after spending millions to develop it. But there was nothing inevitable about that outcome. A data protection board would serve as a kind of ombudsman, giving citizens a stronger voice in protesting questionable practices as well as advising businesses on how to steer clear of privacy abuses.

The United States might look abroad for guidance. Ever since the terrors of Hitler's occupation, when the Nazis used telephone records to identify suspicious individuals, Western European governments have enforced strict privacy regulations. It is illegal, for example, for European phone companies to keep any record of who citizens call, aside from the limited information needed for billing.

Canada, Britain, Australia, and other countries have already created privacy protection organizations that have considerable power. In Germany during the early 1980s, for example, privacy advocates forced the government to postpone a planned census that the critics said was too intrusive.

Meanwhile, there is reason for optimism in the United States; civil libertarians are joining with technologists as the network grows from infancy. And computers users are, in fact, a particularly powerful elite, assuming that the country's economic future belongs to information-savvy people.

Still, policymakers should not be distracted by a misguided focus on the elites: a universally accessible computer network that citizens may contribute to freely, without fear of surveillance or censorship, will be good for everyone. Ultimately, computer users are hoping to create far-flung communities that combine the friendliness of a pastoral village with the sophistication, tolerance, and opportunity for growth and new experience offered by life in a modern city.

THIS IS THE FULL-TEXT.

Copyright Massachusetts Institute of Technology Alumni Association 1992

Geographic Names: US

Descriptors: Computer networks; Globalization; Computer security; Privacy; Problems; Recommendations
Classification Codes: 5250 (CN=Telecommunications systems); 9180 (CN=International); 5140 (CN=Security); 9190 (CN=United States)

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Select	Set Searched for	In	Records
○	S1 PRODIGY AND INTERNET	All subject words	20415
○	S2 (PREFERENCE OR PREFERENCES OR SETTINGS OR SETUP) Combined with set 1	All subject words	1081
○	S3 PD<19930101 Combined with set 2	All subject words	5
◉	S4 PD<19930101 Combined with set 1	All subject words	31

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Database Name	Database Name
• Business & Industry(TM) (File 9)	• Gale Group New Product Announcements/Plus® (File 621)
• ABI/INFORM® (File 15)	• CMP Computer Fulltext (File 647)
• Gale Group PROMT® (1990 - present) (File 16)	• Business Wire (1986-Feb 1999) (File 810)
• Gale Group Trade & Industry Database(TM) (File 148)	• PR Newswire (1987-Apr 1999) (File 813)

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select all none **Records 1-10 of 31** Next 10 **Price**

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1. IIA Speakers Focus on Network Opportunities and Obstacles, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15) $3.20
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7. Using the **Internet** for reference, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15) $3.20
8. **Internet** opens frontiers for online explorers, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15) $3.20
9. Of Bytes and Rights, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15) $3.20
10. Happy Holidays!, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15) $3.20

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select all none **Records 11-20 of 31** Previous 10 | Next 10 **Price**

☐ 11.	Ziff Communications Builds Online Computer-Information Service, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15)	$3.20
☐ 12.	The "Dead" Database: Where Do Databases Go When They Leave Online?, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15)	$3.20
☐ 13.	Out of the Archives and Into the Streets: American Memory in American Libr aries, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15)	$3.20
☐ 14.	Conferencing Communications, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15)	$3.20
☐ 15.	APPC/MVS Distributed Application Support, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15)	$3.20
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☐ 17.	Multimedia Finally Appears Within Networks' Reach, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15)	$3.20
☐ 18.	DEC, AT&T TO LINK VAXS AND PBXS Interfaces between VAX computers from Digi tal Equipment Corp. and PBXs, **890626**, CMP Computer Fulltext (File 647)	$2.70
☐ 19.	How to Tap Into the Outside World, **920101**, CMP Computer Fulltext (File 647)	$2.70
☐ 20.	HIGH FIBER, **921130**, CMP Computer Fulltext (File 647)	$2.70

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21. Cornell Students `Ask Uncle Ezra' for Assistance, **920217**, CMP Computer Fulltext (File 647) $2.70

22. LAN NOTES - Meltdown E-Mail Experiment: How Irresponsible Was it?, **920309**, CMP Computer Fulltext (File 647) $2.70

23. **Prodigy** Ups Subscriber Fee And Adds New Services, Features, Sept 18, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

24. **Prodigy**, Sept 14, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

25. **Prodigy** services viewed, Sept 11, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

26. Zenith To Sells PCs Direct Through 800 Number 08/13/92, August 13, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

27. **Prodigy** Announces Plans To Offer **Internet** Access 06/18/92, June 18, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

28. Meltdown E-Mail Experiment: How Irresponsible Was It?, March 9, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

29. Cornell Students 'Ask Uncle Ezra' for Assistance, Feb 17, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

30. Former GEnie Head Bill Louden Joining US Videotel 12/06/91, Dec 6, 1991, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

select all | none **Records 21-30 of 31** Previous 10 | Next 1 **Price**

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select all none

Records 31-31 of 31 Previous 10 **Price**

☐ 31. Online services ease at-home biz isolation, June 16, 1991, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

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Records 11 of 31 In full Format

11. **4/9/11 (Item 11 from file: 15)**
00641079 92-56019

Ziff Communications Builds Online Computer-Information Service

Weichbrodt, Mary Beth Kullen
Link-Up v9n5 pp: 1, 12
Sep/Oct 1992
ISSN: 0739-988X **Journal Code:** LUP
Document Type: Journal article **Language:** English **Length:** 2 Pages
Word Count: 1980

Abstract:

By reorganizing the existing services of the Ziff Desktop Information (ZDI) division and introducing a few new ones, Ziff Communications Co. offers a personal computer (PC) information product for almost every need. Prominent among the ZDI product line is ZiffNet Information Service. Users can access ZiffNet through CompuServe and **Prodigy** telecommunications network. ZiffNet focuses on the PC industry, and another product, ZiffNet/Mac, is for Macintosh users. The basic services of ZiffNet include: 1. ZiffNet Magazines Online, 2. ZiffNet Buyer's Market, which contains a listing of 10,000 computer products from 130 direct sellers, and 3. the ZiffNet Support Forum. One of ZiffNet's main technical support services is the Cobb Group Online. ZiffNet provides technical access to the Cobb Group staff for support in Lotus 1-2-3, WordPerfect, and DOS. Information provided by ZiffNet for **Prodigy** includes news and commentary, buying advice, technical advice and a bulletin board.

Text:

When I sold gym shoes during my college years, there were basically two popular choices: tennis shoes and high-topped tennis shoes. Over the years, the gym-shoe market has undergone several revolutions, and now the major producers of athletic footwear have practically more designs and styles than a full-featured database could track. Add to that the diversification into t-shirts, sweat bands, caps, athletic bags, and so forth, and the once-minor athletic apparel companies have grown into influential giants.

A similar story could be told about the Ziff Communications Company. Building on a knowledge base assembled through the publication of a variety of computer magazines, the company formed the Ziff Desktop Information

(ZDI) division in 1991. By reorganizing existing services, and introducing a few new ones, Ziff has demonstrated that it can offer a personal-computer information product for nearly every need.

Prominent among the ZDI products is the ZiffNet Information Service. ZiffNet's precursor, PC MagNet (an online strategy to deliver PC Magazine utility software to readers), along with other services like PC Contact (derived from PC/Computing magazine), successfully demonstrated that a print magazine and an online service could compliment each other quite well.

Ziff Communications publishes PC Magazine, PC/Computing, PC Week, PC Sources, Computer Shopper, MacWeek, MacUser, and Corporate Computing. Altogether, these magazines provide information on a regular basis to nearly 3 million subscribers. With a substantial body of accumulated information in hand, Ziff decided to gather it in electronic form, add software downloading, and offer direct access to the writers and editors through interactive forums.

"We see the two approaches as completely unique, and at the same time, completely complimentary," said Lisa Landa, ZiffNet marketing communications manager. "Print you can touch, have in your hand, clip, pass along to another reader. There is a certain cost efficiency.

"Online offers a unique content," Landa continued, "the way you can search for particular information--go right in and immediately find it."

The service is available through direct access, and, following announcements this spring and summer, through CompuServe and **Prodigy** , respectively. ZiffNet offers one product which focuses on the PC industry, and another for Mac users.

Users can access ZiffNet and its Macintosh sibling, ZiffNet/Mac, through the CompuServe telecommunication network; it is not necessary to be a CompuServe subscriber to access the service this way. CompuServe subscribers who become ZiffNet members can add "Znt" as a prefix gateway code to their commands (for example "Go Znt:Softlib" to enter ZiffNet's Software and Utilities Library), and can thus exit CompuServe and enter the ZiffNet service.

A variety of basic services are available for a monthly membership fee of $2.50 and no additional connect charges. Many of the more meaty services, however, such as downloadable programs, many interactive forums with Ziff editors, and much of the technical support, cost an additional $12.80 per hour (1200 and 2400 bps) or $22.80 per hour (9600 bps). A monthly newsletter called Threads offers tips, techniques for best usage, and summaries of downloadable software offerings.

"The information is organized sometimes by content," said Landa, "and sometimes by mission, that is, (in answer to the question) 'Where do I go for information about...?'" There are six major computer-related information areas on ZiffNet; however, the information offered in one area is often repeated in another. For example, PC Week's News Briefs appear in the Ziff Magazines Online section, but also in the News and Reference section.

THE BASIC SERVICES

The following list represents the information which is provided with no additional connect charges on ZiffNet:

* Ziff Magazines Online, offering the PC Magazine Editor's Choice, Free! Take a Survey, PC/Computing's Most Valuable Products awards, PC Week's News Briefs, and ZiffNet Product Reviews Index.

* Software and Utilities Library. In this section, PC Magazine feature utilities are free to download for 30 days following the mail date of the print issue. That is the only option in the utilities library available with the basic subscription.

* ZiffNet Buyers' Market. A discussion on this follows later.

* The ZiffNet Support Forum.

* News and Reference. MacWeek News in Brief is available in this section for the basic fee.

* ZiffNet Highlights and Information. Users can access Today on ZiffNet, Quick Reference, Account Maintenance, and Online Manual.

ZiffNet/Mac is structured in a similar way, except that Macintosh publications and products are featured.

Ziff Buyers' Market and the ZiffNet/Mac Buyers' Guide are described as online buying services. The Buyers' Market is a compendium listing 10,000 computer products sold by 130 direct sellers. Information is provided by advertisers according to a Ziff-defined format. Listings are updated monthly, and include product name, specifications, feature information, pricing, vendor source, service and warranty information, credit cards accepted, and ordering information. Advertisers can buy more space to supplement this information if they choose.

As a user pages through ZiffNet Buyers' Market, he or she sees specials of the day or week, a product-category listing, sub-categories, criteria to refine selections from the database, a list of products meeting the criteria (displayed in an index), and detailed information provided by the vendor.

Ziff states that more than 80 percent of ZiffNet users make purchase decisions at their companies. Once a product is selected, the subscriber has all the information necessary to place an order.

The Ziff Buyers' Market is also available to CompuServe subscribers who are not ZiffNet subscribers. The CompuServe command, Go Buymarket, gains access to the database; however CompuServe members pay the standard hourly connect charges to access this service. (CompuServe rates are $12.80 per hour for 1200-and 2400-bps access; $22.80 per hour for 9600-bps access.)

The ZiffNet/Mac Buyers' Guide is similar; however, it includes approximately 4,000 Macintosh-related products, and can be searched by company, product name, or keyword. ZiffNet/Mac commissioned the development of a HyperCard program, ready to download, which helps a potential purchaser of a Macintosh to define his or her intended use, and then to run the criteria against the full line of available Macs to select the most appropriate model.

EXTRA SERVICES

Ziff hasn't forgotten that the initial service rendered by PC MagNet--a means for subscribers to download software utilities--is still one of the most popular reasons for computer users to go online. ZiffNet offers access to 2,200 shareware, freeware, and public-domain software programs that can be downloaded. It also has archived PC Magazine and PC/Computing utilities. Public Brand Software (another Ziff Communications Company product) contents are also available. Printed versions of ZiffNet, ZiffNet/Mac, and Public Brand Software catalogs can be ordered for reference at no charge.

Sample versions of commercial software can be downloaded From a Demos Showcase. ZiffNet users can also search an index for a particular utility program, or upload software submissions for review by the Ziff staff.

In addition to seeking software, online users are interested in communicating with one another and with "experts." ZiffNet offers 20 interactive forums for contact with Ziff editors, columnists, technical staff, as well as industry guests and other ZiffNet users. These forums are generally featured in the ZiffNet Magazines Online area. In addition to editorial contacts, this area includes tips, gossip columns, and utilities published in the magazines.

Some buying information is also available at a surcharge. One service is the Buyer's Digests, which contain all the related material on ZiffNet which pertains to a particular product (for example, a 386 notebook computer), including specifications of products, vendor information, product reviews published in Ziff magazines, and a buyer's checklist. Each Buyer's Digest costs $14.95 plus connect time to download. The Digest can be read through the use of a downloadable utility available in the Buyer's Digest section, the self-extracting Zview software program.

The Buying Advice section on ZiffNet offers access to the Computer Library, which includes the Computer Directory, a guide to 70,000 products from 12,000 companies, and Computer Database Plus, more than 70,000 full-text articles and abstracts from 140 computer-related publications. ZiffNet subscribers pay $15 per hour in addition to their connect-time charges, plus $1.50 for each full-text article downloaded, $1 for each abstract, and 25 cents for each vendor or product listing.

One of the main technical-support services offered on ZiffNet is the Cobb Group Online. The Cobb Group, also owned by Ziff, publishes nearly three dozen industry newsletters which focus on productivity issues. ZiffNet provides technical access to the Cobb Group staff in three forum areas: Lotus 1-2-3, WordPerfect, and DOS.

Finally, ZiffNet provides daily industry updates in the News Bytes area of the News and Reference section.

ZiffNet subscribers can send electronic mail through CompuServe, MCI, and **Internet** , and they have access to a general-interest section called Not Just Computers.

The ZiffNet/Mac service offers similar information. For example, there is a ZiffNet/Mac News Bytes area offering daily information on the Macintosh industry. Nearly 1,000 shareware and freeware programs can be downloaded. Mac-specific Seybold newsletters and seminars have been advertised as well. Electronic-mail communication is possible through CompuServe, MCI, **Internet** , and AT&T mail.

ZIFFNET FOR **PRODIGY** .

Currently, ZiffNet for **Prodigy** is available to MS-DOS users only, and does not include the Macintosh information base "ZiffNet on **Prodigy** is a subset of the information on CompuServe," said Landa "The focus on **Prodigy** is on downloadable software. We call our **Prodigy** people 'emerging power users.' The whole interface is as straightforward and elegant as possible to help the novice computer user to download software very easily."

Five main categories of information are provided on ZiffNet for **Prodigy** :

* Downloadable Libraries offer 2,000 shareware and public-domain programs--selections identified by Ziff magazines and Public Brand Software. The ZiffNet Download Manager has been created as a utility to track which programs a user has already downloaded, to simplify the downloading process, and to provide a means to decompress programs for use. Demos of commercially available software programs are also available.

* News and Commentary delivers weekly stories from PC Week, both full text and abstracts; in-depth discussions of current computer-industry issues or trends; new product reviews from PC Week and PC Magazine; and columns taken from Ziff magazine opinion writers.

* Buying Advice includes this week's features, best buys describing new products and price reductions or bundling arrangements, awards listings from Ziff magazines, various PC/Computing checklists of questions to ask before making a purchase, the buyers companion from PC Sources, and the fact files (product-review synopses) from PC Magazine.

* Technical Advice offers solutions to common PC problems, and tips for making software, hardware, and systems work more efficiently.

* The Bulletin Board section brings together **Prodigy** service members, Ziff experts, and industry leaders in topical discussions.

Subscribers to ZiffNet for **Prodigy** pay $14.95 per month for three hours usage, and $6 per hour for additional time, as well as their standard monthly **Prodigy** service membership.

ZIFFNET PHILOSOPHY

"We empirically believe in narrowcast services," said Landa. "We meet the needs of different types of users."

Ziff figures everyone has something to gain in this kind of diversification and repackaging of its services. "For the print publications, it strengthens the relationship with the reader," said Greg Jarboe, director of public relations for Ziff Communications Company. "Readers can now interact more than passively. If they read about a piece of utility software in the magazine, they can go into ZiffNet and download it. They can interact with the editors. There is a fairly regular usage of surveys--from the serious to every now and again when we throw in something whimsical.
"It strengthens the relationship to the subscriber, and they tend to renew. It tends to reinforce the print medium. People still subscribe to PC Magazine," Jarboe continued. "We just crossed the million-subscriber milestone. Lots of people still enjoy reading the old-fashioned way."

The specially designed online services seem to make good use of all the work that goes into producing print information.

Maybe, like the shoe companies found, custom fit and product diversification make good sense.

For additional information, contact Ziff Communications Company, 25 First Street, Cambridge, MA 02141 (Phone: 800-666-0330 or 617-252-5000).

THIS IS THE FULL-TEXT.

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Company Names:
Ziff Communications Co
Geographic Names: US

Descriptors: Online ; Information industry; Applications; Support; Data bases; Service introduction; Case studies
Classification Codes: 9120 (CN=Product specific); 9190 (CN=United States); 8302

(CN=Software and computer services); 9110 (CN=Company specific)

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Records for: @pd<19930101

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select all none

Records 23 of 31 In full Format

23. **4/9/23 (Item 1 from file: 16)**
02501271 **Supplier Number:** 43306514 **(THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)**

Prodigy Ups Subscriber Fee And Adds New Services, Features

IDP Report , v 13 , n 35 , p N/A
Sept 18 , 1992
ISSN: 0197-0178
Language: English **Record Type:** Fulltext
Document Type: Newsletter ; Trade
Word Count: 931

Text:

Prodigy Services Co. continues to seek ways to generate new revenue streams from its 1.75 million members (or about 920,000 households). The consumer service raised its monthly subscriber rate and introduced several new Custom Choice services last week.

The new monthly rate is up 15.4% to $14.95/month from $12.95/month. Subscribers who commit to a one-year subscription for $119.40 can lock in at the current $9.95/month rate if they renew by Nov. 1. After Nov. 1, a one year subscription will be $12.95/month. In essence, those subscribers who have always committed to one year have never had a price change--paying $9.95 per month since the service launched in October 1988, despite price increases. But the majority of **Prodigy** subscribers, those who pay on a month-by-month basis, have seen their monthly rate increase 50.3%, or $5/month, in two years. The $9.95 rate was jumped to $12.95 in October 1990 and now to $14.95.

The other part of **Prodigy** 's strategy is Custom Choice services, which cost the subscriber an additional fee. **Prodigy** 's most successful Custom Choice to date is Strategic Investor, which offers company data for an additional $14.95 per month. The service links into **Prodigy** 's regular business news and quotes. Investment information, which also includes online stock transactions over Pershing's PCFN (IDP, Aug. 7), has been a boon to **Prodigy** . More than one-third of **Prodigy** subscribers have rated business/finance their number one interest.

Running a close second to Strategic Investor is the recently added ZiffNet, which provides software downloading and computer news. A new Custom Choice planned to be introduced later this year is Sesame Street, developed by Children's Television Workshop. The service, which will be priced at $9.95 per month for five hours of usage, will include Muppet Mail which is personally addressed to each child. In total, **Prodigy** now has 10 Custom Choice services.

9600 Baud Access, Other Additions

Prodigy made several new product and service announcements as well, including the addition later this year of 9600 baud access in selected cities where **Prodigy** has its own network (about 100 sites). There will be a "small additional charge" to access the service at 9600 baud. A 9600 baud modem will be available to current subscribers in October at "an attractive price" for a limited time, Henry Heilbrunn, senior vice president, media, told IDP. It is to **Prodigy** 's advantage for customers to use 9600 baud modems and keep **Prodigy** 's telecommunications costs down.

Prodigy also said that it will triple the number of bulletin board topics to more than 400 by year end. **Prodigy** said its bulletin boards are quite active with members posting more than 80,000 public notes per day.

In November customers will be able to better navigate throughout **Prodigy** using new software built into the system that provides for cross-references and relevance searching. New communications software will be offered later this year "at nominal cost" that will enable members to communicate with people on **Internet** , the international network for education and research. The software will also contain a feature to send faxes and first-class letters for additional fees.

Other additions to **Prodigy** center on its investment services. This month **Prodigy** will provide access to one week's worth of company news on listed corporations, up from two days (the information is available via a gateway with Dow Jones News/Retrieval). The Quote Check feature will add quotes on more than 50 market indices, statistics and key indicators. Stocks and company news will be linked, enabling users to access a price quote as well as related financial news and other data on the stock using pull-down menus.

Prodigy will launch a media blitz this fall and winter which will include messages to specific target audiences, such as parents with young children or individual investors.

Windows Version Planned For '93

In 1993, **Prodigy** plans to introduce a Windows version for DOS and an upgrade to the Macintosh version. Farther off, plans may also include the addition of CD ROM discs to complement **Prodigy** services or distribution of **Prodigy** over television sets or other devices, such as personal digital assistants (PDAs) or enhanced telephones, whichever catches the consumers' fancy. Heilbrunn notes that new software to be introduced in 1993, combined with the higher speed 9600 baud modem, will give **Prodigy** the capability to distribute and display photographic images.

Most Subscribers Will Swallow Price Increase

Prodigy hopes its new pricing plan convinces more subscribers to take out one-year subscriptions. The reality is that most **Prodigy** subscribers pay on a month-to-month basis and will likely continue to do so, despite the discount incentive. Most consumers simply do not like to pay ahead of time for service, and would rather keep the money in their pockets.

But it is also likely that **Prodigy** will not lose too many customers with its new monthly rate as most customers who like the service will just decide to swallow the $2/month increase. Although **Prodigy** is not guaranteed a 15% revenue increase with the new price, the price hike may likely bring about a 10% gain in subscription dollars. With the addition of new customers and of some new Custom Choice subscriptions, **Prodigy** should see a significant revenue increase this year, even if sales from advertising and transactions are flat or slightly down. But how close **Prodigy** is to breaking even on its reported $1 billion investment, and how well **Prodigy** will maintain subscribers in the face of new competition for home entertainment/information, is still anybody's guess.

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Publisher Name: Cowles-SIMBA Information
Company Names: **Prodigy** Services Co.
Event Names: *740 (Commodity & service prices); 360 (Services information)
Geographic Names: *1USA (United States)
Product Names: *4811500 (Specialized Telecommunication Services)
Industry Names: BUSN (Any type of business); LIB (Library and Information Science)
NAICS Codes: 51331 (Wired Telecommunications Carriers)
Special Features: COMPANY

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Records for: @pd<19930101
save as alert... save strategy only...

Output | Format: Full Record | Output as: Browser | display/send
Modify | refine search | back to picklist
select all none
Records 27 of 31 In full Format

27. **4/9/27 (Item 5 from file: 16)**
02352030 **Supplier Number:** 43085597 **(THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)**

Prodigy Announces Plans To Offer Internet Access 06/18/92

Newsbytes , p N/A
June 18 , 1992
Language: English **Record Type:** Fulltext
Document Type: Newswire ; General Trade
Word Count: 317

Text:

WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK, U.S.A., 1992 JUN 18 (NB) -- The graphically-based on-line network service **Prodigy** has announced its plans to allow users access to the **Internet** , a text-based international system of linked computer networks.

Prodigy 's General Counsel George Perry has announced the company's intention to go on the **Internet** . Speculation is the connection is to take place this fall.

Steve Hein of public relations for **Prodigy** told Newsbytes he had no specifics on the plan other than the company wants to maintain the service's ease-of-use. The **Internet** is notoriously cryptic, with even mail addresses that are 24 characters long interspaced with symbols and acronyms.

Internet access is coveted because of the wealth of information on the service, and access is usually obtained through government or university systems. Also, unlike **Prodigy** , commercial advertising and charging for services is traditionally prohibited on the **Internet** .

Most of the major on-line services, such as Compuserve, MCI Mail, AT&T Mail, Applelink, and Sprint Mail have offered electronic mail (e-mail) gateways for the exchange of messages to and from **Internet** users for some time.

One recently announced on-line service, Berkeley, California-based Holonet, offers users **Internet** access through a menuing system that eliminates many of the cryptic Unix commands.

Vienna, Virginia-based America Online (AOL), another graphically-based on-line service recently announced it will now provide an e-mail gateway so its subscribers can exchange e-mail with **Internet** users. The e-mail gateway is offered to AOL subscribers at no extra cost and the service is attempting to entice **Internet** users to join by offering any **Internet** user a free AOL start up kit.

Hein told Newsbytes the type and extent of the **Internet** access **Prodigy** is planning is unknown at this time, as it the service's plans for

the pricing of **Internet** access.
(Linda Rohrbough/19920618/Press Contact: Steve Hein, **Prodigy** , tel 914-993-8843, fax 914-684-0278, Liz Sara, America Online, 703-883-1503, AOL Public Contact: 800-827-6364)

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Publisher Name: Newsbytes News Network
Company Names: **Prodigy** Services Co.
Event Names: *360 (Services information)
Geographic Names: *1USA (United States)
Product Names: *4811500 (Specialized Telecommunication Services)
Industry Names: BUSN (Any type of business); CMPT (Computers and Office Automation); TELC (Telecommunications)
NAICS Codes: 51331 (Wired Telecommunications Carriers)
Special Features: COMPANY

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Records for: @pd<19930101

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Output Format: Full Record Output as: Browser display/send
Modify refine search back to picklist
select all none

Records 31 of 31 In full Format

31. **4/9/31 (Item 9 from file: 16)**
01723405 **Supplier Number:** 42152969 **(THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)**

Online services ease at-home biz isolation

Crain's Chicago Business , p T8
June 16 , 1991
ISSN: 0149-6956
Language: English **Record Type:** Fulltext
Document Type: Magazine/Journal; Tabloid ; Trade
Word Count: 733

Text:

By LEN STRAZEWSKI

Research libraries, supportive colleagues and watercooler gossip may all be out of reach for home workers, but a personal computer and telephone modem can help narrow the communication gap.

Online computer services, such as Columbus, Ohio-based CompuServe Information Service and White Plains, N.Y.-based **Prodigy** , provide homebound professionals with research databases, electronic mail (e-mail) to clients and colleagues and open bulletin boards where members can network with other professionals in their fields, say telecommuting and home working experts.

"My modem is my strongest communications tool," explains Stephen Talmadge, president of Optimal Systems Inc. in Evanston, a home-based computer consulting business. "And it's not just for communicating directly with my clients' computers.

"I use online services such as CompuServe to send electronic mail and computer files to clients and colleagues, and tap into the special interest groups for problem-solving and brainstorming," he says.

CompuServe, the oldest and largest of the online services with about 800,000 users, offers a broad range of personal and professional resources, including an electronic mail service that not only transmits messages among members, but also links up to other e-mail systems, such as MCI Mail, AT&T's EasyLink and the college- and university-operated **Internet** .

Also, users who do word processing on personal computers but who do not have a facsimile machine can use the electronic mail service to transmit computer-generated documents directly to a client's fax machine without having to print out the text.

The online service also offers users a wide variety of information databases, including press releases from the U.S. Census Bureau, abstracts from computer and technical journals and financial information on public and private companies and mutual funds.

According to Mr. Talmadge, however, CompuServe's greatest strength is its membership, who communicate with each other through hundreds of special interest groups or forums, each focused on a specific hobby or professional topic. The forums feature libraries of helpful hints and user-generated software, which can be downloaded into members' computers, and electronic bulletin boards on which users discuss relevant topics.

"I've come up with some of the most useful and definitive answers to professional questions by posting messages on the various CompuServe forums," Mr. Talmadge says. "I ask and the other members answer. And often, this information leads to solutions I can sell to my clients," he says.

Among the CompuServe forums is the Working from Home group, managed by Paul and Sarah Edwards, authors of "Working from Home: Everything You Need to Know About Living and Working Under the Same Roof" (Jeremy P. Tarcher Inc., N.Y., 1990), a resource book for home workers.

Forum members frequently discuss their work activities on the bulletin board feature, comparing and reviewing equipment, brainstorming ideas for new business and discussing problems inherent in their occupations, Mr. Edwards says.

"One of the latest topics of interest has been the availability of health care for self-employed workers," Mr. Edwards notes.

Prodigy , a joint venture of Armonk, N.Y.-based IBM Corp. and Sears, Roebuck and Co., has more than 700,000 members and also features more than 100 special interest groups for hobbyists and professionals, and several research databases including an online encyclopedia and stock market price database.

Like CompuServe's forums, the **Prodigy** special interest groups allow users to post questions and share answers, but the service does not offer software libraries. However, the forums often feature regular columns by authors in various fields.

Prodigy 's strength is not in the interaction of its members but in various transactional services, such as online banking, food and catalog shopping and stock trading. And whereas **Prodigy** does not offer fax service or interconnect with other online services, it does feature electronic mail among members.

Other online aids for home workers include locally based electronic bulletin boards operated by hobbyists and professional associations. The Chicago Computer Society (CCS), for example, operates the CCS BBS (Bulletin Board Service), a computer bulletin board accessed directly by modem.

Designed for and operated by members, but available to the general public, the service features local electronic mail, special interest conferences on legal and business issues and a wide range of downloadable software - much of which is public domain or shareware (free trial use).

Other local services include a bulletin board with investment tips operated by the American Assn. of Individual Investors and a computer hardware support service operated by U.S. Robotics Inc. in Skokie.

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Publisher Name: Crain Communications, Inc.
Company Names: CompuServ; **Prodigy** Services Co.
Event Names: *360 (Services information)
Geographic Names: *1USA (United States)
Product Names: *4811500 (Specialized Telecommunication Services)
Industry Names: BUSN (Any type of business); REG (Business, Regional)
NAICS Codes: 51331 (Wired Telecommunications Carriers)
Special Features: COMPANY

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Search History

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Select	Set Searched for	In	Records
○	S1 PRODIGY AND INTERNET	All subject words	20415
○	S2 (PREFERENCE OR PREFERENCES OR SETTINGS OR SETUP) Combined with set 1	All subject words	1081
○	S3 PD<19930101 Combined with set 2	All subject words	5
○	S4 PD<19930101 Combined with set 1	All subject words	31
○	S5 AOL	All subject words	144771
○	S6 PD<19930101 Combined with set 5	All subject words	40
◉	S7 unique items	All subject words	39

Consider all

See last 5 sets | show picklist...

Search Form

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Search for

In All subject words

☑ Within selected search history set

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Database List

Database Name	Database Name
• Business & Industry(TM) (File 9)	• Gale Group New Product Announcements/Plus® (File 621)
• ABI/INFORM® (File 15)	• CMP Computer Fulltext (File 647)
• Gale Group PROMT® (1990 - present) (File 16)	• Business Wire (1986-Feb 1999) (File 810)
• Gale Group Trade & Industry Database(TM) (File 148)	• PR Newswire (1987-Apr 1999) (File 813)

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Dynamic Search: Business & Industry(TM), ABI/INFORM®, Gale Group PROMT® (1990 - present), Gale Group Trade & Industry Database(TM), Gale Group New Product Announcements/Plus®, CMP Computer Fulltext, Business Wire (1986-Feb 1999), PR Newswire (1987-Apr 1999)

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Modify | sorted by: Unsorted | sort | remove duplicates | refine search

select all | none

Records 1-10 of 39 Next 10 **Price**

1. UC Berkeley Ext Offers College Courses On America Online, August 1929, Business & Industry(R) (File 9) $3.20
2. BRANSON INTRODUCES ITS COMPLETE 900 SERIES PRODUCT LINE - CHOICES FOR THE U LTRASONIC PLASTICS ASSEMBLY INDUSTRY, August 15, 1989, Gale Group New Prod.Annou.(R) (File 621) $3.25
3. Thoughts and opinions on online services and computer communications, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15) $3.20
4. America Online Expands Media Alliances, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15) $3.20
5. Store of the Month: Making It in the Last Frontier, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15) $3.20
6. Burps on Disk, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15) $3.20
7. "Online Lite" Has Data Power, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15) $3.20
8. America Online: A Graphics-Based Success, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15) $3.20
9. GeoWorks Brings Windowing Environment to IBM XTs, ATs, ABI/Inform(R) (File 15) $3.20
10. Online Shareware Sources, **920701**, CMP Computer Fulltext (File 647) $2.70

select all | none

Records 1-10 of 39 Next 10 **Price**

Output | show rates... | format: Full Record | destination: Browser | display/send

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Picklist for: *@pd<19930101*

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Output | show rates... | format: Full Record | destination: Browser | display/send

Modify | sorted by: Unsorted | sort | remove duplicates | refine search

select all none **Records 11-20 of 39** Previous 10 | Next 10 **Price**

11. Pop-Up Reference Tools, **920501**, CMP Computer Fulltext (File 647) $2.70

12. FIFTH GENERATION SYSTEMS INTRODUCES COPYDOUBLER AS A STAND-ALONE PRODUCT, Dec 16, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

13. Apple, America Online In Info Services Pact 12/04/92, Dec 4, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

14. EIGHTEEN EIGHT LABORATORIES announces the immediate availability of three n ew interface cards for the PL2500 family of AT hosted Floating Point Array Processors, Nov 12, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

15. America Online reaches agreements with 2 newspapers, CNN, NAA, Oct 19, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

16. TechWorks (TM) Announces GraceLAN Update Manager (TM) 1.1, July 22, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

17. America Online Offers New Mac Version 2.0 07/21/92, July 21, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

18. Simba Describes On-line Headlines Of 1991 07/09/92, July 9, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

19. Prodigy Announces Plans To Offer Internet Access 06/18/92, June 18, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

20. America Online Introduces Internet Access 06/04/92, June 4, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

select all none **Records 11-20 of 39** Previous 10 | Next 10 **Price**

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Picklist for: @pd<19930101

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Output | show rates... | format: Full Record | destination: Browser | display/send

Modify | sorted by: Unsorted | sort | remove duplicates | refine search

select all none **Records 21-30 of 39** Previous 10 | Next 9 **Price**

21. AMERICA ONLINE ANNOUNCES INTERNATIONAL E-MAIL GATEWAY, June 3, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

22. TGS Systems Announces Prograph (R) Extension Products to support Communicat ions, SQL Database Access, Visual Effects and Linking of C and Pascal Libra ries, May 8, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

23. AARTI ORGANICS, Feb 10, 1992, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

24. TGS Systems' Prograph (TM) 2.5 Release Adds Suite of New Features Plus Syst em 7.0/IAC Support, a Database Engine and Access to External SQL Servers, August 6, 1991, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

25. LEXAFILE (TM) LEGAL FORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM GETS MAJOR UPGRADE, June 24, 1991, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

26. SMELL OF SUCCESS, March 16, 1991, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

27. ONLINE TALK SHOW TO DEBUT, Sept 19, 1990, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

28. Car, Gottstein accept buyout, August 17, 1990, Gale Group PROMT(R) (File 16) $3.25

29. International Semi-Tech Microelectronics Inc. announces sale of common shar es to Berjaya Corp, October 27, 1989, Business Wire (File 810) $2.60

30. Major business coalition files lawsuit against the state of Oregon, September 6, 1988, Business Wire (File 810) $2.60

select all none **Records 21-30 of 39** Previous 10 | Next 9 **Price**

Output | show rates... | format: Full Record | destination: Browser | display/send

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Modify | sorted by: Unsorted | sort | remove duplicates | refine search

select all | none

Records 31-39 of 39 Previous 10 **Price**

31. Phon-Net completes $1 million private placement with Institutional Investor , March 30, 1919, PR Newswire (File 813) $2.60

32. TOPCLiCK announces the transition of its web site www.topclick.com to a pre mier Internet hosting facility to guarantee quality and performance, March 12, 1919, PR Newswire (File 813) $2.60

33. e-commerce to be added to medcareonline.com; Hambrecht & Quist estimates he althcare e-commerce to be worth "in the hundreds of billions", February 16, 1919, PR Newswire (File 813) $2.60

34. Broadband Internet access gaining momentum; Microsoft, **AOL** and others dev eloping high-speed internet connections, January 28, 1919, PR Newswire (File 813) $2.60

35. Medcareonline.com launched as healthcare portal; Hambrecht & Quist reports on "the convergence of healthcare & the Internet', January 25, 1919, PR Newswire (File 813) $2.60

36. **AOL** 's high-speed Internet access a boon to American Alliance's streaming media content, January 14, 1919, PR Newswire (File 813) $2.60

37. Key Capital Corporation Announces Early Member Registration Success and Add itional Alliance Members, November 5, 1919, PR Newswire (File 813) $2.60

38. Key Capital Corporation ("KCAP") Announces Mass Membership Drive for KeyClu b International e-Commerce Internet Site, October 26, 1919, PR Newswire (File 813) $2.60

39. WeatherPlanner Offers Weather Forecasting Service for Outdoor Enthusiasts; Weather Forecasts Now Available Up to 12 Months in Advance, May 5, 1919, PR Newswire (File 813) $2.60

select all | none

Records 31-39 of 39 Previous 10 **Price**

Output | show rates... | format: Full Record | destination: Browser | display / send

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Dynamic Search: Business & Industry(TM), ABI/INFORM®, Gale Group PROMT® (1990 - present), Gale Group Trade & Industry Database(TM), Gale Group New Product Announcements/Plus®, CMP Computer Fulltext, Business Wire (1986-Feb 1999), PR Newswire (1987-Apr 1999)
Records for: @pd<19930101
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Output | Format: Full Record | Output as: Browser | display/send
Modify | refine search | back to picklist
select all none
Records 7 of 39 In full Format

7. 7/9/7 (Item 5 from file: 15)
00599759 92-14932

"Online Lite" Has Data Power

O'Leary, Mick
Link-Up v9n1 pp: 13
Jan/Feb 1992
ISSN: 0739-988X **Journal Code:** LUP
Document Type: Journal article **Language:** English **Length:** 1 Pages

Abstract:

America Online (**AOL**) offers a Macintosh-like interface and cheery icons. Its laid-back interface makes one wonder if **AOL** stands for "America's Online Lite." **AOL** provides a full range of computing features, including message boards, software libraries, real-time conferences, news services, and informational databases. **AOL** supports the educational arena via: 1. its adoption of the Apple interface, 2. its effort to provide communications and computing services to teachers and other educators, and 3. its education section, which includes numerous discussion areas and databases covering educational techniques and issues. **AOL** offers Macintosh forums for every level of expertise. Apple II users are welcomed with a full set of forums, including those for beginners, developers, education, games, graphics, telecommunications, utilities, and hardware. Forums for users of MS-DOS machines are arranged into very broad categories. **AOL** offers a large number of manufacturer-sponsored product support forums.

Company Names:
America Online Inc
Geographic Names: US

Descriptors: Online ; User interface; Data bases; Microcomputers; Characteristics; Bulletin boards
Classification Codes: 5200 (CN=Communications & information management); 9120 (CN=Product specific); 9190 (CN=United States)

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Records for: @pd<19930101

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select all none

Records 17 of 39 In full Format

17. 7/9/17 (Item 6 from file: 16)
02407594 **Supplier Number:** 43167354 **(THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)**

America Online Offers New Mac Version 2.0 07/21/92

Newsbytes , p N/A
July 21 , 1992
Language: English **Record Type:** Fulltext
Document Type: Newswire ; General Trade
Word Count: 290

Text:

VIENNA, VIRGINIA, U.S.A., 1992 JUL 21 (NB) -- America Online (**AOL**) says it is offering a new version, 2.0, of its on-line service for Macintosh users that speeds downloads as well as other enhancements.

The "Download Manager" is the biggest change, **AOL** said, and allows users to select a group of files to download all at once rather than one at a time. **AOL** says the Download Manager will list all the selected files, their size, and the time it will take to complete the download.

Users have the option to start the download right then, have the computer log-off when the download is complete, or schedule the software to log-on and download the files at a later time. Also, files will be automatically decompressed after log-ff, as a convenience to the user, **AOL** added.

Other changes include more full support for Mac font styles so subscribers can send attention-getting memos and mail, more icon-based functions in place of text-based menus, and the ability to customize the software.

To get the upgrade, existing subscribers can use the keyword "UPGRADE" while on-line to request a free "one-click" upgrade kit. New subscribers can request the new version in an America Online subscriber kit by calling America Online.

As an added incentive to try downloading, a new book published by Ventana Press in a joint venture with **AOL** profiles 500 Mac shareware titles available for download on **AOL** . The book includes an **AOL** starter kit, shareware titles, and five free hour of on-line usage time, **AOL** said. The book retails for $39.95 and will be featured at Macworld Expo in Boston in August.

(Linda Rohrbough/19920721/Press Contact: Liz Sara, America Online, tel 703-883-1503, fax 703-883-1509; Public Contact: **AOL** , 800-827-6364)

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1	IS&R	L1	1	("4603232").PN.	USPAT	2000/08/31 13:50
2	IS&R	L2	1	("5041972").PN.	USPAT	2000/08/31 14:22
3	BRS	L3	1188	((server or servers) and (repository))	USPAT	2000/08/31 14:38
4	BRS	L4	847	3 and (opinion or opinions or judgement or judgements or view or views)	USPAT	2000/08/31 14:38
5	BRS	L5	846	4 and (product or products or service or services or software or information)	USPAT	2000/08/31 14:39
6	BRS	L6	185	5 and ((user or customer) near (opinion or opinions or judgement or judgements or view or views))	USPAT	2000/08/31 14:39
7	BRS	L7	93	6 and (user near (preference or preferences or desires or wants))	USPAT	2000/08/31 14:37 considered + flow
8	BRS	L8	114	((server or servers) and (repository))	EPO; JPO; Derwent	2000/08/31 14:38
9	BRS	L9	7	8 and (opinion or opinions or judgement or judgements or view or views)	EPO; JPO; Derwent	2000/08/31 14:39
10	BRS	L10	6	9 and (product or products or service or services or software or information)	EPO; JPO; Derwent	2000/08/31 14:39 Considered ab
11	BRS	L11	1	10 and ((user or customer) near (opinion or opinions or judgement or judgements or view or views))	EPO; JPO; Derwent	2000/08/31 14:39

	Document ID	Title
1	US 5012515 A	Security control method for distributed processing system - defines security ratings for communication between servers where no central controller exists
2	US 5819084 A	Co-presence data retrieval system e.g. FTP, HTTP, Gopher and network file systems - has co-presence server for assigning data-retrieval client to virtual place associated with retrieved object upon receiving information from co-presence client that specific file had been retrieved so users can modify and discuss
3	CA 2161837 A	Software tool for development of application programs - has repository archive of predefined objects, task file, graphical user interface and application engine.
4	CA 2191640 A	User-interactive applications integration system - comprises data server for accessing configuration repository to automatically transfer data units between two software applications
5	GB 2340272 A	Method of specifying configuration preferences in a network system
6	WO 200014666 A2	Product structure configuration management system for computer network

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1	IN
2	IN
3	IN
4	IN
5	IN
6	IN

	Document ID	Title	Current OR
1	US 6112024 A	Development system providing methods for managing different versions of objects with a meta model	
2	US 6112186 A	Distributed system for facilitating exchange of user information and opinion using automated collaborative filtering	705/10
3	US 6112190 A	Method and system for commercial credit analysis	705/38
4	US 6094654 A	Data management system for file and database management	707/8
5	US 6088693 A	Data management system for file and database management	707/8
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8	US 6078326 A	System and method providing centricity user environment	345/353
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10	US 6044382 A	Data transaction assembly server	707/505
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12	US 6032132 A	Telecommunications access cost management system	705/34

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	Document ID	Title	Current OR
13	US 6029195 A	System for customized electronic identification of desirable objects	709/219
14	US 6023684 A	Three tier financial transaction system with cache memory	705/35
15	US 6020881 A	Graphical user interface with method and apparatus for interfacing to remote devices	345/327
16	US 6016394 A	Method and system for database application software creation requiring minimal programming	717/1
17	US 6011537 A	System for delivering and simultaneously displaying primary and secondary information, and for displaying only the secondary information during interstitial space	345/115
18	US 6012044 A	User interface for a financial advisory system	705/36
19	US 6004276 A	Open architecture cardiology information system	600/508
20	US 6006230 A	Database application development system with improved methods for distributing and executing objects across multiple tiers	707/10
21	US 5999525 A	Method for video telephony over a hybrid network	370/352
22	US 5999179 A	Platform independent computer network management client	345/349
23	US 5999944 A	Method and apparatus for implementing dynamic VRML	707/104

	Inventor
13	Herz, Frederick S. M.
14	Pearson, Mark P.
15	Naughton, Patrick J. , et al.
16	Walker, Jeffrey L.
17	Slotznick, Benjamin
18	Maggioncalda, Jeff N. , et al.
19	Wright, Gregory John , et al.
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21	Krishnaswamy, Sridhar , et al.
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25	US 5995106 A	Graphical user interface for displaying and navigating in a directed graph structure	345/357
26	US 5991776 A	Database system with improved methods for storing free-form data objects of data records	707/205
27	US 5987103 A	Telephone/transaction entry device and system for entering transaction data into databases	379/93.17
28	US 5987440 A	Personal information security and exchange tool	705/44
29	US 5974413 A	Semantic user interface	707/6
30	US 5974409 A	System and method for locating information in an on-line network	707/3
31	US 5966695 A	Sales and marketing support system using a graphical query prospect database	705/10
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34	US 5930764 A	Sales and marketing support system using a customer information database	705/10
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	Document ID	Title	Current OR
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38	US 5892909 A	Intranet-based system with methods for co-active delivery of information to multiple users	709/201
39	US 5890140 A	System for communicating with an electronic delivery system that integrates global financial services	705/35
40	US 5886697 A	Method and apparatus for improved graphical user interface having anthropomorphic characters	345/348
41	US 5884056 A	Method and system for video browsing on the world wide web	345/339
42	US 5874954 A	Centricity-based interface and method	345/333
43	US 5872850 A	System for enabling information marketplace	705/51
44	US 5870549 A	Systems and methods for storing, delivering, and managing messages	709/206
45	US 5870746 A	System and method for segmenting a database based upon data attributes	707/101
46	US 5867494 A	System, method and article of manufacture with integrated video conferencing billing in a communication system architecture	370/352
47	US 5864875 A	Data management system for problems, releases and parts	707/200
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50	US 5842212 A	Data modeling and computer access record memory	707/100
51	US 5835087 A	System for generation of object profiles for a system for customized electronic identification of desirable objects	345/327
52	US 5832496 A	System and method for performing intelligent analysis of a computer database	707/102
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55	US 5812130 A	Data management system and method for concurrent engineering	345/339
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58	US 5787416 A	Methods for hypertext reporting in a relational database management system	707/2

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62	US 5754939 A	System for generation of user profiles for a system for customized electronic identification of desirable objects	455/4.2
63	US 5748188 A	Hypertext markup language (HTML) extensions for graphical reporting over an internet	345/326
64	US 5748961 A	Efficient method and apparatus for compiling and linking modules of computer code in a large software system	717/1
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69	US 5694601 A	Portable and dynamic distributed applications architecture	709/101
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75	US 5615367 A	System and methods including automatic linking of tables for improved relational database modeling with interface	707/102
76	US 5603025 A	Methods for hypertext reporting in a relational database management system	707/2
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69	White, John W.
70	Shaughnessy, Steven T.
71	Anand, Tejwansh S. , et al.
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74	Dickinson, Robert D.
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80	US 5519862 A	Concurrent processing apparatus with incremental command objects	717/1
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83	US 5459865 A	Runtime loader	709/108
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Guided Search | new search | favorites | settings | cost | logoff | help

Dynamic Search: Business & Industry(TM), ABI/INFORM®, Gale Group PROMT® (1990 - present), Gale Group Trade & Industry Database(TM), Gale Group New Product Announcements/Plus®, CMP Computer Fulltext, Business Wire (1986-Feb 1999), PR Newswire (1987-Apr 1999)

Records for: @pd<19930101

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Records 6 of 31 In full Format

☐ 6. **4/9/6 (Item 6 from file: 15)**
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EasyNet: What has become of the small giant?

Schoenbrun, Cynthia
Online v17n1 pp: 52-56
Jan 1993
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ISSN: 0146-5422 **Journal Code:** ONL
Document Type: Journal article **Language:** English **Length:** 5 Pages
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Abstract:

EasyNet, and its emphasis on menu-driven, true end-user searching, is in its 8th year of dominance as the premier gateway service. Initially, users reached EasyNet by dialing into the 800 number and paid for their searches by credit card or an EasyNet account. Today, EasyNet (and its relations) provides access to over 850 online databases, (over 1,000 counting the number of individual sources broken out from parent databases) from 13 host systems. EasyNet customers always have had access to online documentation, including a database directory that can be searched by subject category or by name. To keep tight control over the widespread services of Telebase Systems Inc., EasyNet's parent, the company has instituted a Project Management Team responsible for all facets of the service and products through direct communication with online hosts and remarketers. Telebase/EasyNet seems to do its best work at offering unified access to the large amount of information it has collected through online database host agreements.

Text:

When EasyNet appeared on the commercial market in late 1984, it sparked the interest of occasional online database users and novice, but inquisitive, searchers. Many expert searchers, however, were convinced that either EasyNet would not be successful at providing needed information and access to database sources, or that it would not be applicable to their searching needs. Most likely, both these groups were also convinced that the product would never stay on the market.

EasyNet, and its emphasis on menu-driven, true end-user searching, is in

its eighth year of dominance as the premier gateway service. However, there has not been much industry coverage about the progress of the company. Here is some background and information about the plans and promotions of Telebase Systems, Inc., EasyNet's parent company.

A BRIEF HISTORY--OF THE LIFE OF EASYNET

EasyNet (known formally as the "EasyNet Knowledge Gateway") was conceived in 1982. The Monitor, March 1987, states that EasyNet was designed as "a form of intelligent interface between the nonexpert, who has a need for information, and online text systems, which hold the information" 1!. The unique gateway system has always been intended to provide unified access to a bank of information via a menu-driven service. It should be noted that EasyNet was able to develop its product in part due to a sponsorship from the National Federation of Abstracting and Indexing Services (NFAIS).

Access to the service has also always been easy, initially via a toll-free number (1-800-EASYNET). This 800 number access still exists for the individual subscriber, but the service is usually accessed as options on electronic mail and bulletin board systems, as well as via networks such as SprintNet, TYMNET and CompuNet.

Initially, the system was marketed through direct mail, publicity and library contacts. Its first big commercial break came when Telebase made an arrangement to provide an EasyNet version, to be called "InfoMaster" as a value-added service to what was then the Western Union EasyLink electronic mail system. (InfoMaster still exists, but EasyLink is now owned and operated by AT&T.)

When this arrangement proved successful for Telebase, it began to make arrangements with other remarketers, including its most successful with CompuServe. Telebase also forged into foreign markets by way of remarketer relationships with Telecom Canada, Istel (a U.K. company now owned by AT&T), ItalCable S.p.A (Italy), Sanoma (Finland), Teldan in Israel and NIFTY Corporation in Japan. Most of these companies are still promoting and providing their versions of the EasyNet service.
The EasyNet product met with positive response in the industry due to its success in remarketer distribution. In 1987, Telebase was presented with the Information Product of the Year Award by the European Association of Information Services (EUSIDIC). And in 1988, Telebase obtained a U.S. patent for its Knowledge Gateway structure.

According to the NFAIS Bulletin, November 1988, James E. Coane, Telebase president and CEO stated at that time, "It's the only patent we know that protects a gateway to multiple hosts. It validates...Something that is unique by virtue of the patent...by building a successful business on the technology. It validates the importance of gateways" 2!.

WHO USES EASYNET?

Currently, Telebase gets 75% of its customers from remarketer business and 25% from direct customers. Direct customers include corporate and library accounts as well as individual subscribers. In fact, interested parties are still requesting individual accounts, at the rate of 30 to 50 requests per week, according to Stephen M. Moss, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Telebase.

ACCESS, SCOPE AND PRICE

Initially, users reached EasyNet by dialing into the 800 number and paid for their searches by credit card, or an EasyNet account. There were really no options for choosing which databases were to be searched; the system presented a series of subject and format choices then selected the appropriate database. In 1985, the options were broadened, giving the searcher the ability to choose the databases to access. In 1985, seven host

services were providing approximately 500 databases for searching; the cost of a search was $8.

Today, EasyNet (and its relations) provides access to over 850 online databases, (over 1,000 if you count the number of individual sources broken out from parent databases) from thirteen host systems. Depending on the remarketer, prices range from $9 to $10 a search, although sometimes database price differentiations are handled by charging an appropriate surcharge to cover expenses and profit. Telecommunications charges range from 15c to 35c a minute in the U.S., depending on the telecommunications carrier.

Access to a database via EasyNet is achieved by one of three options:

(1) letting the system choose a database for you based on a series of subject category selections

(2) choosing a database to be searched
(3) scanning a related group of databases

The "SCAN" feature is similar to DIALINDEX and allows you to enter format. Databases can then be accessed directly from the SCAN results menu.

ONLINE DOCUMENTATION

EasyNet customers always have had access to online documentation, including a database directory that can be searched by subject category or by name. This documentation is considered very reliable since it is updated whenever there is an addition or deletion to the service. Common Command Language users can display the searchable fields as well as the display formats at any time in the online session. There is an online tutorial covering searching technique available on most versions of EasyNet as well. All this assistance coupled with online SOS support offers inexperienced users the direction they need to get the most out of the EasyNet service.

EasyNet has also expanded its service offerings on different remarketers. One product added to services such as InfoMaster and EasyNet is the ANALYST service. This service offers information on companies and markets that relate to investment and trade, and is provided via Telebase from Telescan in Texas.

UNIQUE DATABASE DISTRIBUTION
Telebase, in cooperation with CompuServe, has developed a new approach to disbursing information. Not only does Telebase market EasyNet, called IQuest, on CompuServe, it also has seeded individual databases and reference centers throughout the CompuServe system. These unique databases provide additional reference sources for CompuServe users and additional revenue for Telebase. The independent databases are successful because they are priced lower than the IQuest service, and because of their strategic menu placement.

END-USER HELP ONLINE: SOS

One unique feature that Telebase has always employed is instant online help--available by typing SOS at any menu. This command will bring you into live contact with one of the research librarians on staff at the Telebase facilities in Wayne, Pennsylvania. Initially, SOS was available year-round, including holidays, and 24 hours a day. Staff usually worked ten-hour shifts to cover the extensive user support hours. This total support was offered in recognition of the varying lifestyles of researchers, as well as to accommodate foreign users.

In a cost-conscious move begun in 1991, live SOS hours have been reduced. This was done with consideration and consultation with the EasyNet remarketers, Telebase always being mindful of its market. SOS is now

available live from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, Eastern standard time.

To avoid ignoring anyone with questions, comments or complaints, an online "message leaving" program was developed. Users have the option of connecting to it after noting that live SOS support is not available: They are urged to leave important information such as an e-mail address, phone or fax number, statement of problem or question, or information concerning a reprint that may need to be canceled. SOS staffers then collect the messages and respond as soon as possible, in kind, to wary, frustrated or puzzled users.

According to Vilma Lieberman, manager of the User Services Department, SOS calls online average 350 calls per week, messages left online 60 to 80, and voice calls approximately 50. The numbers do change depending on the service, remarketer promotions, and the time of year. (Mid-terms and finals can be quite hectic.)

PRODUCTS GONE AWRY

As a company with access to a large amount of valuable information, Telebase has always been determined to offer additional products to an information-hungry market, both commercial and academic. However, these products have not always succeeded according to the hopes of the company administration. Some of these included:
The Answer Machine: This is a self-contained searching module complete with furniture, computer hardware and communications software, and special password allowing access to a select group of databases targeted to the academic (college library) market.

Clipping Services: Telebase has tried several ways to develop and promote clipping services. One, the Executive Briefing Service was offered via InfoMaster, and while still available does not seem to be thriving. Telebase also developed and promoted "Reapport," a weekly summary of local news on reapportionment issues. Because of its timely nature, the product had a short shelf life, and unfortunately, a short client list to match.

CCL: The Common Command Language capability was added to the EasyNet service to attract more experienced searchers, and was expected to draw the library market. Only five of the thirteen system hosts can be searched using CCL. The search language, as developed by EasyNet, conforms to 150 (international) standards and still could prove a valuable niche product for the company. Although CCL is still available through many remarketers, the company, while planning to support the product, has no plans to promote or enhance it. For a part-time searcher, however, this service would provide a good introduction to the skill of native language searching.

LOOKING BACK TO THE FUTURE
Telebase burst into the information industry with an incredibly unique product. It makes sense, then, that we look in its direction for new applications and uses for online information. I spoke recently with Steve Moss, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Telebase, and reviewed some of their plans for the near and not so near future.

NEW PRODUCTS

Recognizing the power of the company prize, the EasyNet Knowledge Gateway, Moss indicated that the company was developing new products for new markets, and the present major target is the corporate LAN environment. This LAN product is designed with simplified menu access and will contain specialized "corporate collections" of databases most relevant to the information needs of each particular LAN environment. Several Fortune 500 companies have signed on to use this product.

Currently, in Pennsylvania, Telebase has entered into an agreement with the

statewide system of Small Business Development Centers. These centers, funded by the state, help new or start-up companies with information and financial assistance and advice. Now they are also offering searches, via EasyNet to help new companies target markets and clients, and to provide as much information as possible to assist the small business owner. Steve Moss stated that the company will pursue similar arrangements in other states throughout the country.
Another adaptation of the Knowledge Gateway, one that has the company and board of directors very excited is the product, "Homework Helper." This service created and developed by Marvin Weinberger, Executive Vice President of Corporate Development, is geared to the high school and college-level markets. The price for this service will be reasonable, and offered on a subscription basis only. Weinberger is hoping to follow the success of remarketing EasyNet and offer the service on recognized e-mail and bulletin board services. A unique feature of this service, as compared to EasyNet, is that the Homework Helper service will also offer information that is available only via CD-ROM products.

IMPROVED INTERFACE

Telebase is currently working to improve its gateway architecture by developing new system software. This enhancement, called KGC-5, should be fairly invisible to the system user, but will do many things to enhance the service and to build in increased reliability and flexibility. Moss says that this development will help the service remain competitive and near the top of the market for an extended period of time.

The service is also expanding into foreign markets. While Telebase has had a relationship for some time with ItalCable in Italy to provide EasyNet, ItalCable also is the first to enter into a partnership with Telebase to become a "node colleague." Installation of a Knowledge Gateway hardware node in Rome was completed in May 1992. Now, instead of Italian users having to "bounce back" to the U.S. for their information, they will be making a local connection. ItalCable also intends to market the service to other European Community countries and to load local EC databases on its service. Moss hopes that some of these EC databases will, in turn be available through the EasyNet service here.

QUALITY CONTROL

To keep tight control over the widespread services of Telebase, the company has instituted a "Project Management Team" responsible for all facets of the service and products through direct communication with online hosts and remarketers. The team consists of Telebase employees who have extended knowledge of the available products and services. Their duties include liaisons with major remarketers, attention to the different EasyNet remarketer versions, and working with systems and company relations people to leverage the Knowledge Gateway.

THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW

Most of the executive and administrative staff now working at Telebase have been there for at least the past four to five years, and have been able to oversee day-to-day operations with a consistent eye on future plans. Dick Kollin, one of the Telebase founders and part of the original EasyNet team, left the company in 1990. Current executives are:

President/CEO: James E. Coane

VP Finance/CFO: Bruce Johnson

VP Sales and Marketing: Stephen M. Moss

Executive VP Corporate Development: Marvin I. Weinberger

VP Operations: Roger O. Wilcox

THE TELEBASE CRYSTAL BALL

In speaking with Steve Moss about the information industry as a whole, I asked him (1) what does he feel Telebase has contributed to the online information industry; and (2) who are its biggest competitors in the industry. I found his answers interesting.

As for contributions, he listed the following:

* Telebase's EasyNet introduced the gateway concept to the industry.

* The menu-driven system opened the eyes of database hosts to the necessity and popularity of menu-driven systems.

* Telebase Systems, Inc. is the only company that is neutrally positioned between host systems and the remarketers. This position allows Telebase to offer uniform access to many hosts on the same system. No other company or gateway is moving toward providing that level of access, and to making that access a standard.

Many database hosts have tried to imitate the success of EasyNet and its menu-driven system--surely the sincerest form of flattery. Consider Dialog's attempts to develop a menu-driven system. Moss acknowledges that the DIALOG system is not as elegant as EasyNet, but does consider it a serious competitor due to its prominence in the industry and financial strength. Moss feels that Telebase has brought the concept of end-user searching to the attention of industry executives, just as corporate libraries are facing cuts due to downsizing and financially tight times.

As for planned growth during the next year, Moss sees Telebase remaining cash-flow positive and maintaining its position as a very viable player in the information industry. The LAN market product is expected to succeed with a minimum of 15 clients.

In five years, Steve Moss anticipates the expansion of the LAN market product (tailing onto the expansion of the LAN market itself), and forecasts that it will contribute an increasing percentage of Telebase's revenue. Also, Homework Helper will become established, have made its mark on the industry and in its niche market, and will in his opinion, be going strong, also contributing to the revenue growth.

Due to its work with Homework Helper, and the integration of multimedia, Telebase may be among the first to succeed in this market. Also, the success of this particular product may foretell success for subscription-based services on the whole, which Moss thinks is integral to the growth of the information industry.

CONCLUSION AND OPINION

Telebase retains a unique position in the information industry due to its unique product, EasyNet. As a product originally aimed at the end-user searcher, I think it has certainly crossed boundaries that no other company or service has approached to date. I also believe that expert searchers need to look at the service again, and to realize that EasyNet can be a real lifesaver when you need, but don't have access to, smaller or foreign database host services.

However, the company's sights are no longer set on the true at-home enduser. Constant product and service trials by Telebase in this market have shown that the number of people wanting an exclusive, separate enduser product is still rather small. Telebase/EasyNet seems to do its best work at offering unified access to the large amount of information it has collected through online database host agreements. It performs best when

offering variations of this product theme within broader online environments such as CompuServe and EasyLink.

Also, rather than continuing to act like a small start-up, the company has decided to accept the responsibility to its users and shareholders, look at its market position and act grown up. It, realistically, is targeting clients and markets that will guarantee a modicum of success for tailored gateway products. It is developing new services with previous successes in mind.

The inventive serendipitous approach that created EasyNet, and made it such a shining star is no longer a factor--the company has put on its three-piece suit for long-term success.

Editor's Note: At press time, ONLINE learned that Telebase had reduced its marketing staff, and that former Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Steven M. Moss, who was interviewed for this article, has left the company. Marvin Weinberger has also resigned to work for a new company, Infonautics, whose primary product is the Homework Helper described in this article. It is too early to tell what effect these changes will have at Telebase, but the company says the other projects described here are on target and moving forward.--NG!

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THE AUTHOR

Cynthia Schoenbrun is President of Castle Information, an information brokerage located in the Philadelphia area. After she received a Masters of Science in Information Science from Drexel, she worked at the Franklin Research Center. She was also employed by Telebase Systems, Inc., administering its IntelDa Soviet Research Service, and providing online reference assistance via its SOS service. She founded Castle Information in 1992.

Communications to the author should be addressed to Cynthia Schoenbrun, President, Castle Information, 7321 Brookhaven Road, Philadelphia, PA 19151-2206; 215/477-5383; CompuServ--74660,1663; **Internet** --74660.1663compuserve.com; America Online--CynthInfo; **Prodigy** --THGR59B.

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